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ABSTRACT

This Head Start study sought to determine whether or not increased communication among the four groups of adults most influential in the child's transition from preschool to kindergarten would lead to a greater similarity of goals and attitudes among these groups, and thus help the child to bridge the gap between preschool and school. The four groups of adults are the parents, kindergarten teachers, Head Start teachers, and day care teachers. Eight monthly meetings were scheduled for these groups with parents and teachers meeting separately. It was hoped that through these meetings parents and teachers would demonstrate a greater similarity in goals and attitudes. A control group had no such meetings. The groups were pre- and posttested on the ADRES (an alienation questionnaire, Attitude Differences Related to Economic Status) and the TEACH Scale (an assessment of achievement goals for 5-year-old pupils, Teacher Expectations of Achievement for Children in Head Start). Pretest differences between groups were highly significant, showing a gap between the educational values of the groups. Pre-post analysis of TEACH revealed a trend toward similarity in goals among members of the experimental group, although the small sample and poor parent attendance render the results statistically undependable. (MH)

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APPLICATION OF GROUP DYNAMICS PROCEDURES TO PROMOTE COMMUNICATION AMONG PARENTS AND TEACHERS[1]

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Problem

The origin of Project Head Start was based on the premise that poverty children are not exposed, at home, to the same influences that affect middle-class children of preschool age. Head Start is generally seen as a means of helping to ease the transition from poverty or minority group culture to the culture of the school by not only providing those experiences which are not available to these children but also by bringing the influence of the minority culture to bear upon the school.

Studies of the effect of Head Start and other preschool experiences upon the later school performance of disadvantaged children report significant differences in favor of children who have attended preschool classes. Early indication from longitudinal studies show that this advantage has virtually disappeared by the end of the third grade. There are various explanations for the failure of preschool alumni to maintain their gains, one of which, of course, is the possibility that the preschool training has been ineffective or inadequate. However, another possibility, mentioned by Datta (1969), is that certain situational factors inherent in the school system prevent a smooth transition from Head Start to kindergarten and thereby impede a continuation of improvement. For example, in a classroom where the kindergarten teacher may be responsible for more than 30 children, maintaining discipline and order may be the primary concern. An active and inquisitive Head Start child might suffer more in a repressive

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environment than a non-Head Start child. Hodges and Spicker (1967) have questioned the wisdom of providing preschool experiences designed to produce behaviors which are unacceptable in the elementary school:

> "....are we creating a new discontinuity for the children between preschool intervention programs with the highly individualized instruction and high teacher-pupil ratios, and regular public school programs with much less individualized instruction and low teacher-pupil ratios? If so, such a discontinuity should not be seen as a fault of pre-intervention programs, but should be viewed as an argument for modifying traditional kindergarten and primary school programs."

Kitano (1963), in a monograph on Child Care Centers, found that children exposed to this kind of preschool program had a difficult time adjusting to kindergarten, presumably because of differences in values or methods between the two systems. Featherstone (1967), writing about the English Primary Schools, reports that the new style primary schools lean heavily on the model of the nursery school and pointed out that "nursery [under five years old] and infant [five through seven or eight years old] teachers were often trained together in the same institutions." By contrast Caldwell (1967) expressed great dismay that such communication does not exist in the United States. She emphatically suggests that nursery school teachers "should influence the educational program for older children as well as accommodate to it."

Some experimental projects in this country have tried various means of easing the transition. Investigators of the Fresno Preschool Program (1969) felt that greater articulation was needed between preschool and kindergarten. Therefore, they initiated a program in which mothers of kindergarten children continued to help in the classroom as they had done the previous year in preschool. Concomitantly, the preschool staff introduced the kindergarten teachers to the methods and philosophy of the

preschool. The Early Education Project in New York City (1969) has circumvented the main transition problem by extending their program to include kindergarten as well as the first three grades. When the preschool and kindergarten classes were originally established, the investigators felt that early intervention would adequately prepare the children for any regular school program. However, they later came to believe that "continuous and appropriately sequenced reinforcement" in the grades was extremely important for maintaining gains through the school years.

The difference between preschool and kindergarten can be conceptualized on many levels, with intervention planned accordingly. Hodges and Spicker (1967) refer to individualized instruction and low teacher-pupil ratios as characteristics which distinguish preschool from kindergarten. The gap may be characterized by the oft-heard comment that Head Start teachers work hard at encouraging children to speak up and express themselves and then kindergarten teachers want them to be quiet and follow instructions. In this context, administrative decisions could impose relevant changes in curricula, class size, goals, methods, or class composition. An alternative approach would seek to bring about changes in the attitudes of the significant adults, the teacher and the parents, through group dynamics and interaction.

Bidwell (1966) points out that research has concentrated on student groups and that little is known about the orientation of teachers to their own colleagues or to the administrative bureaucracy. It is important to learn more about the attitudes and values among these adults, the differences within groups, and the lines of communication and influence between them. The present study attempted to bridge the gap between preschool and

kindergarten by utilizing the techniques of group dynamics.

As indicated by Bennis (1962), one of the primary learnings to be expected in a group is the awareness of choice. Absence in the group setting of the everyday constraints (such as those brought into play to get a certain task completed or to relate acceptably to those in authority) breeds a climate "for men to find things out for themselves, i.e., to create order, clarify one's identity, establish norms and a sense of community." The process emphasized in the present research is that of encouraging "the participant to think about his behavior, most particularly to think about how he chooses to behave." The accent was on the degree to which teachers are free to make choices.

Another goal also stressed by Bennis (1962) was to promote a "spirit of inquiry," a trying out of ideas and a willingness to look beyond easy answers or excuses. This spirit of curiosity and experimental attitude toward people and the phenomena of human behavior is especially important for teachers. The approach can be expected to develop the teachers' skills in interpersonal communication with fellow teachers and with parents, and should also help them in the classroom.

The information gained during group discussions should shed light on the quality of existing relationships and ultimately on the usefulness of group encounter as an agent of change. The adults who are directly involved in the transition of the child from home to school are the parents, Head Start and other preschool teachers, Day Care teachers, and kindergarten teachers. Head Start research has in general shown that children of parents who have a high level of participation in the school program perform better on achievement and development tests (Grotberg, 1969).

Therefore, Head Start places great emphasis on the importance of parental involvement; the decrease or cessation of participation into the elementary school represents a characteristic feature of the gap between these groups.

The design for the present study included administering two tests and setting up group meetings among teachers and parents. The objectives were as follows:

1. To discover what competencies, characteristics, and qualities parents and teachers value and attempt to develop in their pupils.

2. To look at the nature of the "gap" as measured by test scores and as expressed through communication during group meetings.

3. To use the group situation in helping to develop and describe a procedure for establishing a greater degree of understanding and correspondence in goals and values among homes, preschools, and kindergartens within a geographic area.

Hypotheses

1. Teachers and parents will demonstrate a greater degree of similarity in the value placed on specific behavioral objectives as measured by the TEACH scale after participating in a series of group meetings, as compared to similar groups without this group experience.

2. Parents will demonstrate a higher degree of alienation than teachers, and within the teacher group, the Head Start teachers would be most alienated and the kindergarten teachers the least.

3. Parents who attend group meetings will demonstrate a decrease in alienation as measured by pre-post scores on the ADRES scale.

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Method

Subjects

The participants in this study were the four groups of adults most influential in the child's transition from preschool to kindergarten: parents, kindergarten teachers, Head Start teachers, and Day Care teachers--all from the Santa Monica Unified School District.

Treatments

Experimental Group I. 15 teachers, including five kindergarten teachers, three day care teachers, and seven Head Start teachers or aides.

Experimental Group II. 15 parents of children from classes represented in the experimental teacher group.

Control Group. 19 teachers, including five kindergarten teachers, six day care teachers, and eight Head Start teachers or aides.

Procedure

All teachers were asked to rate their pupils as being in the "top" (children doing well in school or best suited to do well in school), "middle" (children in the middle of the class), or "lower" (children having problems with school or least suited to do well in school) third of their class, accompanied by short descriptive adjectives or phrases about the child, explaining the rating. Parents were selected to represent a cross-section of these three categories of children.

Eight joint monthly meetings of parents and teachers had been scheduled, but after the initial contacts with teachers were made, it became evident that the teachers favored separate meetings. It was therefore decided to have separate parent and teacher meetings, with the hope that after a while

the two groups would want to meet together. Unfortunately, by the time the teachers were ready to accept parents as group participants, most of the parents had stopped coming.

A major emphasis of the early sessions of each group was to reveal more about the group to its members. At the first meeting the ADRES scale was administered. The subsequent sessions were directed toward developing the ability in the group members to communicate their concerns and desires, and to become more aware of their own values or goals and those of their peers. Through this increased expressiveness the group leaders gained insight into the issues of interest and significance to the individual members of the group. It was then possible for the group leaders to point out the fact that the long-range goals within groups and between groups were basically the same.

Criterion Measures

Each member of the above groups was pretested with the following instruments:

1. ADRES Scale (Attitude Differences Related to Economic Status), a 75-item alienation questionnaire designed to measure attitude changes as a result of community action programs (Hanson, Kitano, & Stern, 1968).

2. TEACH Scale (Teacher Expectations of Achievement for Children in Head Start), an instrument for assessing the values placed on various behavioral objectives (Stern, Pritchard, & Rosenquist, 1970).

Procedure and Group Discussions

As indicated earlier, the teachers met in one group and the parents in another. The content of these meetings is reported in some detail in the

Appendix. However, it seems that a summary of the type of discussions which took place at these meetings would be very helpful in understanding the changes which occurred, or failed to occur.

Group Discussions:

Parents. Parent meetings were sparsely attended. Discussions indicated both practical and attitudinal problems in working more closely in group meetings or with teachers. The practical problems include typical maternal restraints such as children's illnesses and other family obligations, inability to arrange transportation at the right hours, even, in one case, the objections of the spouse to taking time off from family duties to attend the meetings. Advance warning of meeting dates and the availability of baby-sitting could not sufficiently compensate.

Attitudinal problems played a more major role in preventing parent participation. Relatively strong feelings of powerlessness were common to all parents. Some expressed strong desire for change in the schools while others felt incompetent to judge, being certain that the teacher must know best. However, each felt a desire to improve communication and to increase their involvement in their child's education, even though they were very unsure about how to do this. Some were also aware that many teachers did not really want parent participation, and this knowledge added to their general uneasiness about initiating attempts at involvement.

The P.T.A. was seen as inadequately serving the needs for communication and involvement. Two specific suggestions were voiced for reducing the gaps: (1) the creation of a parent-oriented "ombudsman" in the school's bureaucracy, and (2) the formation of regular, scheduled meetings between each teacher and the parents of her class.

Teachers. In contrast to the sporadic attendance of the parents, the teachers tended to come regularly to all the meetings. There appeared to be feelings of mutual interest and desire to share ideas from both the preschool and kindergarten teachers. A number of them individually expressed feelings about the usefulness of the group as a means for getting acquainted with teachers at other levels. It would then be possible to pursue individual contacts with teachers who had or will have the same children in order to assist each other in the children's transition.

The meeting often revolved around the questions of what are desirable goals, curriculum and methods, and how should these be coordinated from one level to the next. Though the question of what one would do if given a free rein was not discussed extensively, the teachers did voice their complaints about restraints which prevented effective work. Both Head Start and kindergarten teachers felt that the benefits of services and individualized attention available in Head Start could not be continued in kindergarten under the overworked conditions of double sessions, lack of aides, and lack of access or time for parent contacts. Head Start teachers became more sympathetic to the problems of the kindergarten teachers and started thinking that their energies might be better spent on improving kindergarten conditions rather than on further changes in Head Start itself. It was felt that without a coordinated follow-through from Head Start through kindergarten, any early advantages for Head Starters would be lost.

Throughout the meetings there was never much eagerness to get involved with parents, especially on the part of the kindergarten group. Though admitting their potential use as aides and as one means of coordination between the levels, the teachers did not feel they had the time or the necessary skills to train the parents to become effective classroom aides.

Results

The first hypothesis was tested in terms of scores on the TEACH scale. In the pilot work with this scale, a factor analysis of the 100 items produced seven distinct factors. Inspection of the items which fell out under these factors showed several items which did not seem to fit meaningfully into the factors to which they had been assigned. For the purposes of this study, a modified factor structure, based on the original factor analysis plus content validity judgments, was used. Five items which either confounded two or more factors, or did not seem related to any factor at all, were eliminated. The remaining 95 items (Table 1) were divided into ten subscales. These are presented in Table 2, together with the mean scores by treatment groups. The differences among these groups on the ten subscales are presented graphically in Figure 1. One notable feature is that parents and the Head Start teachers rated most factors relatively high, whereas day care and kindergarten teachers tended to give lower ratings. The parents had the highest scores on seven factors and the Head Start teachers on three. An analysis of variance (Table 3) indicates these differences were significant in six out of the ten subscales. To determine more precisely the relationships among the groups, a Newman-Keuls test was performed for the six significant items. The results are reported in Table 4.

Parents were significantly higher than at least one of the three other groups on all six items, which probably indicates that they did not differentiate among the items, considering them all equally important goals. In terms of relative importance, the teachers are generally in agreement. All three groups rated subscales II and III (maturity and creativity) as the two most

important goals. Teachers also agree about the importance of the child's self-concept and social development (I and IV).

The most significant disagreements were in the areas of motor skills and the three learning categories. For example, on items like drawing simple geometric forms or knowing the concepts "more than" and "less than," Head Start teachers had a mean of 6.5 on both items, whereas kindergarten teachers had means of only 2.6 and 2.2, respectively. An explanation of these differences may be found in the fact that teachers were asked to rate each behavior for a child entering kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers still tend to think of themselves as the child's first teacher, and expect children to come to them with few academic skills. They are more inclined to feel that the primary role of the preschool is to foster maturity and develop social skills. Head Start teachers, on the other hand, agree that these things are important but are more in agreement with parents, who feel that cognitive learning is also important and expect to teach many school-readiness skills during the preschool year.

The hypothesis that teachers and parents in the experimental group would become more similar in goals than the control group was tested by comparing the pre and posttest variance around the mean for the two groups. That is, the experimental group should show less variance on the posttest than the control group. A test for homogeneity of variance was performed, and the results are reported in Table 5. Both control and experimental groups tended to have less variance on the posttest; and although the experimental variance was reduced somewhat more than the control, the difference is not significant on any of the subscales. However, it is interesting to note that the largest jump in agreement for the experimental group

occurred in the cognitive items where there had been the largest original disagreement.

The means and standard deviations on ADRES pretest scores, presented in Table 6, show some support for the first part of the second hypothesis. There appears to be a consistent trend indicating that alienation is inversely related to the teacher hierarchy. However, the analysis of variance reported in Table 7 provides convincing evidence in support of the hypothesized difference between parents and teachers. The Newman-Keuls analysis shows all three teacher groups as significantly different ($p < .01$) from the parent group.

The third hypothesis, that the posttest scores would reveal less alienation as a result of the group interactions, could not be tested. Very few of the parents in the control group completed the posttest, and the parent attendance at the meetings was so poor that it was unrealistic to use the data from the few parents who did attend as representative of the total experimental group.

Conclusions

Although the general hypothesis that teachers and parents would demonstrate more similarity in goals after group meetings could not be adequately tested, the study did carry out its three basic objectives. It was established that all groups seem to place more relative importance on interpersonal as opposed to cognitive areas of learning. However, there is a significant gap among groups in terms of the importance of cognitive goals. Kindergarten and day care teachers apparently feel that not much cognitive learning need occur at all during the preschool year. Perhaps, then, for the Head Start pupil, kindergarten is merely a repeat instead of

an extension of cognitive studies.

Another feature of the gap is revealed by the parents' high alienation scores. It is probable that a parent's feelings of powerlessness and hopelessness would have more effect on the child in kindergarten, for in Head Start parent-teacher contact is relatively frequent and the child has a high degree of individual attention. A child accustomed to the attention and freedom of Head Start and used to a correspondence between his teachers' and his parents' expectations may become totally bewildered in kindergarten and reflect his parents' feelings of alienation.

Obviously more communication between teachers and parents is needed. Parents should recognize and hopefully understand the teacher's goals so that they do not expect something of the child that is not being taught. In addition, teachers need to be aware of parents' feelings and modify their own goals somewhat to accord with parents' assessment of child needs. This kind of modification should also increase the parents' feelings of importance in regard to their child's education.

Unfortunately, promoting teacher-parent communication is not an easy proposition. The kindergarten teachers are overburdened in their present teaching load. They feel they have little time, energy, or administrative support to make contact with parents or other teachers. Many of the concerns and complaints expressed in the early meetings centered around resentment over restrictions imposed by the channels of authority from administrators. As group members come to see themselves as similar, they will come to rely more on each other for ideas, and have less need to appeal to administrators for solutions to mutual problems.

It is felt that exposure to the Head Start teachers' relatively

successful working arrangements with parents has given the kindergarten teachers in the experimental group a more receptive attitude toward working with parents. One purpose of a future teachers' group might be to facilitate this kind of coordination, where each learns from the other's experiences, as well as to smooth the transition from one level to another through curriculum coordination. It is feasible that Head Start teachers might directly aid the overburdened kindergarten teachers. For example, Head Start teachers could visit their alumni, offer assistance to kindergarten teachers regarding the child's history and contacts with parents, and make available Head Start resources, such as evaluations, social workers, and aides. Head Start teachers could also act effectively as a liaison between the kindergarten teacher and the active parents from Head Start to promote their active participation in kindergarten.

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Table 1

Teachers Expectation of Achievement in Head Start (TEACH)

Item	Degree of Importance (Low 1 2 3 4 5 — High 6 7 8 9 10)	Subscale Number
1. Uses correctly the concepts "add to" and "take away from" for problems up to 5		IX
2. Puts materials away after an activity without being told		II
3. Tells who is in front of him, behind him, first and last while standing in a line		IX
4. Dances or beats time to music		V
5. Sits quietly during lessons or storytime		VI
6. Supplies a word to rhyme with another word		VIII
7. Assembles puzzles of 5 to 10 pieces entirely by himself		V
8. Tells the class about a special celebration at his home (e.g. the Piñata)		X
9. Feeds and cares for school animals		II
10. Stays with a single task for at least 30 minutes		*
11. Gives the names of his brothers and sisters		VII
12. Smiles to show satisfaction with self when looking in a mirror		I
13. Talks about how his own body grows and changes		I
14. Identifies positively with his own race		I
15. Asks questions about objects in the environment		III
16. Reminds peers of the group's rules when these are being overlooked		VI
17. Writes his first name		VII

*dropped

Table 1 (cont'd.)

	Degree of Importance: Low 1 2 3 4 5 / High 6 7 8 9 10	
18. Memorizes and recites several nursery rhymes		VII
19. Uses correctly newly acquired vocabulary		X
20. Explores different solutions to a problem (e.g. balancing blocks)		III
21. Plays with one or two children rather than a large group		*
22. Ventures into new situations when there is risk, but no danger		III
23. Talks with adults freely		X
24. Uses teacher behavior as a model when relating to others		IV
25. Uses materials freely and creatively in art activities		III
26. Ties own shoes		II
27. States his last name and home address		VII
28. Draws simple geometric forms such as triangle, circle, etc.		VIII
29. Goes to the bathroom by himself		II
30. Tastes each kind of food served at mealtime		III
31. Classifies objects by their group names (e.g. dogs and cats are animals and flowers and trees are plants)		IX
32. Tells the correct time by reading the clock		VIII
33. Engages in housekeeping play in which boys and girls "try on" their own appropriate sex role		IV
34. Names the activities which distinguish different community occupations (e.g. what does a mailman do?)		VIII
35. Shares a cherished toy brought from home		IV

*dropped

Table 1 (cont'd.)

Degree of Importance

	Low 1	2	3	4	5	High 6	7	8	9	10	
36. Pumps on a swing											V
37. Identifies and observes basic traffic signals and regulations											VI
38. Expresses his affection for others verbally or nonverbally											IV
39. Takes out frustations and hostility on material objects instead of attacking others											*
40. Leads peers in free play activities											IV
41. Builds a representational structure in block play											VIII
42. Pours sand or water from one container to another without excessive spilling											V
43. Wipes excess paint off brush on rim of container											VI
44. Participates in group activities											IV
45. Names the colors you mix to get brown, orange, purple, pink or gray											VIII
46. Discriminates different sizes, shapes and textures by touch											VIII
47. Strings 5 beads on a shoelace following a set pattern											IX
48. Constructs simple objects using hammer and other tools											V
49. Sorts and labels coins of different values											IX
50. Recognizes that set quantities remain the same even though they may change in appearance (e.g. the amount of water remains the same in two different sized containers)											IX
51. Names the numerals from 1 to 10											VII
52. Sits quietly at the table during mealtime											VI
53. Takes responsibility for his own mistakes											II

*dropped

Table 1 (cont'd.)

	Degree of Importance: Low 1	2	3	4	5	High 6	7	8	9	10	
54. Volunteers ideas of his own											I
55. Recites the entire alphabet from memory											VII
56. Challenges the decision of an adult											I
57. Carries through on his own after receiving instructions											II
58. Handles school property and the belongings of other persons carefully											IV
59. Shown a picture of a situation, tells an original story about it											X
60. Recognizes his own first name in written form											VII
61. Draws a picture of the human figure which includes basic features (e.g. head, body, legs, etc.)											VIII
62. Dresses himself fastening zippers or buttons correctly											II
63. Tries again on a task after initial failure											I
64. Raises his hand before speaking out in class											VI
65. Uses art materials in the manner prescribed by the teacher											VI
66. Throws and catches a ball											V
67. Names distinctive tastes and odors											VIII
68. Holds pencil between thumb and forefinger in writing position											V
69. Identifies simple written words like "cat," "car," "yes," "no"											VII
70. Asks questions about natural phenomena and causation											III
71. Tells his left hand from his right											VIII
72. Expresses pride in his own work											I
73. Completes a self-given task											II
74. Names and imitates sounds heard in the environment or on records											VIII

Table 1 (cont'd.)

	Degree of Importance: Low 1	2	3	4	5	High 6	7	8	9	10	
75. Stays within printed outline when coloring or cutting											V
76. Understands simple science concepts (e.g. ice is frozen water, plants grow from seeds)											IX
77. Walks along a straight line with good balance											V
78. Participates in games selected by peers											IV
79. Expresses pleasure when involved in a new learning experience											I
80. Writes a specified letter of the alphabet											VII
81. Given one of a pair of simple opposites, states the other (e.g. cold-hot; tall-short; good-bad)											IX
82. Names the primary and secondary colors											VIII
83. Shows care when handling his own belongings											II
84. Acts out a story											III
85. Sings a simple song in tune											*
86. Volunteers to help another child in some activity											IV
87. Tells how a friend is both different from and similar to himself											IX
88. Gives up thumb-sucking without adopting another security device											II
89. Climbs up and down a jungle gym without help											V
90. Gives correct answers to questions of "less than," "more than," and "the same as"											IX
91. Gives the appropriate number for a set of up to 10 objects											VIII
92. Addresses the teacher by name											*

*dropped

Table 1 (cont'd.)

	Degree of Importance: Low 1	2	3	4	5	High 6	7	8	9	10	
93. Jumps rope for 5 consecutive turns											V
94. Talks about his fears											I
95. Skips in forward motion on alternate feet											V
96. Asks for the help of the teacher to solve a problem											VI
97. Answers questions about information presented orally											X
98. Retells in his own words a familiar story											X
99. Shows that equal amounts of clay, when molded into different shapes, are still equal											IX
100. Yells and plays freely during playtime											III

Table 2

Description of 10 Subscales on TEACH with Means and Standard Deviations by Groups

	Scale Description	Means and Standard Deviations							
		Parents		Head Start		Day Care		Kindergarten	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
I.	Self Concept	6.8	0.9	7.1	1.2	6.4	2.2	6.1	2.2
II.	Maturity and Independence	7.5	1.2	7.3	0.8	5.5	1.7	6.5	1.9
III.	Creativity, Curiosity, and Freedom	6.9	1.1	7.4	1.1	6.4	1.8	6.7	1.4
IV.	Social Development	7.0	0.9	6.8	1.2	5.6	2.5	6.1	2.3
V.	Motor Skills and Coordination	6.5	1.4	5.9	1.3	4.4	2.1	4.1	1.5
VI.	Following Directions	7.1	1.4	5.5	1.3	4.4	1.7	5.1	2.1
VII.	Rote Learning	6.7	1.9	4.6	1.3	3.7	1.8	2.7	1.4
VIII.	Informational Learning	6.0	1.4	5.7	1.2	4.1	1.9	3.6	2.0
IX.	Relational Learning	5.8	1.7	5.4	1.5	3.9	1.7	3.3	2.3
X.	Language Development	6.5	1.8	7.0	1.2	5.7	2.5	6.0	1.9

Table 3

Analyses of Variance for Subscales

	MS Between	MS Within	
Source/df	3	42	F
Subscale I	2.49	2.63	0.94
II	8.18	1.86	4.41*
III	2.35	1.81	1.30
IV	4.61	2.97	1.55
V	14.94	2.46	6.08**
VI	13.95	2.61	5.34**
VII	31.08	2.53	12.26**
VIII	15.48	2.51	6.18**
IX	15.87	3.24	4.90*
X	3.91	3.16	1.24

*$p < .05$

**$p < .01$

Table 4

Summary of Significant Differences on Newman-Keuls Tests of Ordered Means by Dependent Variables

Subscale Number	Group Comparisons	q	r (df=42)
II	parents/day care	4.88**	4
	Head Start/day care	4.39**	3
V	parents/kindergarten	5.06**	4
	parents/day care	4.43**	3
	Head Start/kindergarten	3.79*	3
	Head Start/day care	3.16*	2
VI	parents/day care	5.58**	4
	parents/kindergarten	4.13*	3
	parents/Head Start	3.93*	2
VII	parents/kindergarten	8.43**	4
	parents/day care	6.33**	3
	parents/Head Start	4.33**	2
	Head Start/kindergarten	4.01*	3
VIII	parents/kindergarten	5.06**	4
	parents/day care	4.01*	3
	Head Start/kindergarten	4.43**	3
	Head Start/day care	3.38*	2
IX	parents/kindergarten	4.63*	4
	parents/day care	3.53*	3
	Head Start/kindergarten	4.08*	3
	Head Start/day care	2.97*	2

[1]The first group is always superior to the second

*$p < .05$

**$p < .01$

Table 5

Variance on TEACH Scales for Pre to Posttests

Showing No Significant Differences

		Control N = 11		Experimental N = 10		F-Ratio* (Homogeneity of Variance)
		mean	S.D.	mean	S.D.	
I	pre	6.21	1.84	7.00	1.95	1.12
	post	6.57	1.58	6.65	1.67	1.12
II	pre	6.66	1.75	6.46	1.87	1.14
	post	6.58	1.36	6.03	1.80	1.74
III	pre	7.19	1.28	6.70	1.85	2.13
	post	6.95	1.06	6.12	1.56	2.14
IV	pre	6.62	1.79	5.94	2.19	1.49
	post	7.05	1.22	6.08	1.74	2.02
V	pre	4.92	2.70	4.60	1.72	1.44
	post	5.80	1.61	4.59	1.66	1.06
VI	pre	5.31	1.78	5.00	1.61	1.22
	post	5.48	1.67	4.59	1.24	1.82
VII	pre	3.35	1.40	3.57	1.98	1.98
	post	4.74	1.79	3.09	1.17	2.32
VIII	pre	4.73	1.93	4.26	2.18	1.27
	post	5.64	1.80	3.99	1.47	1.50
IX	pre	4.39	2.10	4.15	2.35	1.25
	post	4.50	1.92	3.85	1.59	1.47
X	pre	6.42	1.75	5.98	2.39	1.86
	post	6.33	1.67	5.73	1.23	1.85

*$F = 4.38$, $p < .05$

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations of Pretest Scores of Combined Experimental and Control Groups on ADRES Scale

Group	Parents	Head Start	Day Care	Kindergarten
Total in group	15	15	9	10
Number completing instrument	15	11	7	7
Mean	53.6	26.9	17.1	15.3
S.D.	22.8	17.1	14.6	13.9

Table 7

Analysis of Variance on Pretest Scores for Combined Experimental vs. Control Groups

	df	MS	F
Between groups	3	3576.33	10.21**
Within groups	36	350.30	

**$p < .01$

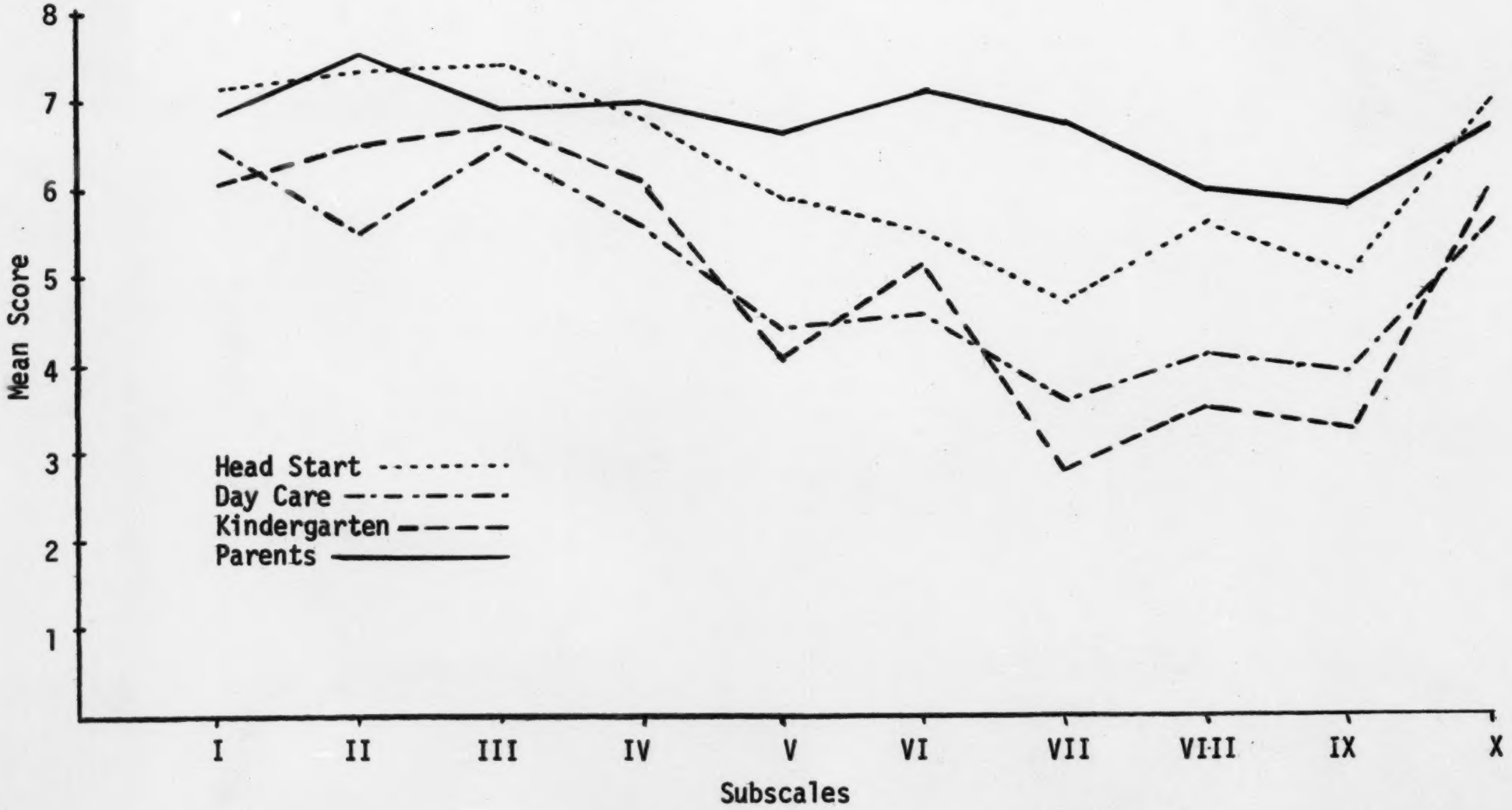

Figure 1. Differences among four treatment groups on 10 subscales of TEACH.

Appendix

Teacher Meetings

October: At the first meeting the project was introduced as an opportunity for communication of needs and goals. The TEACH was administered to all teachers present. Time did not permit subsequent discussion, but informal comments indicated much interest in discussion of items like those on the TEACH. It was also made very clear that the teachers felt no need, and were indeed reluctant, to meet with parents. They evidently felt there was no value for such a group meeting.

November: The meeting was introduced with this question: "What do you people want from this encounter? What's on your mind?" One Head Start teacher raised the question of what is included in the kindergarten curriculum. The ensuing discussion revolved around whether or not certain trips and other experiences which were part of Head Start, but also included in the kindergarten program, could profitably be repeated from one year to the next. Does the child get bored, or does he find something new when repeating the experience at a different age?

December: Introductory remarks reviewed the previous meeting and underlined the importance of early childhood education and the fact that the teachers involved probably know most about the problems. Discussion revolved around record-keeping. A kindergarten teacher admired the frank and informative quality of Head Start reports on children. This led to expression of difficulties and the risk involved in letting critical comments become a permanent part of a child's record. Concern was expressed about prejudicing later teachers and about availability of records to parents. Verbal communication was mentioned as a substitute or adjunct.

January: The meeting began with the question of what the teachers believed the TEACH data would show: "Do you think that preschool and kindergarten teachers are different?" One kindergarten teacher said that a teacher's behavior depended more on the neighborhood of the school than on the grade level of the teacher. Consensus of the teachers was that variation between individuals is so great that there is no clustering at different grade levels. When the question of records came up again, the discussion revolved around how to obtain valid information to record (testing, observation) and by whom. Also considered was the question of what to do with a problem child. In elementary school, outside assistance in the form of special classes can come only after the first grade. Sympathy for this problem was expressed by preschool teachers.

February: The opening question was, "What should be the role of the parent?" Reaction was rather uniformly negative. Some teachers felt that many involved parents were too demanding and not very productive. Other teachers desired more parent contact but felt they couldn't manage the time. When the question of having this group meet with the parent group was raised, the reaction was uniformly negative.

March: Some graphs representing results on the TEACH were shown to the teachers, who were impressed by the similarity of the response between the groups. As if to refute this evidence of similarity, a kindergarten teacher brought up the need for having children line up, an idea which she felt had been disdained at a previous meeting. However most teachers reacted quite positively, feeling that the use of this procedure might vary with the circumstance and with the teacher.

April: A summary of the topics covered in parent group discussions was presented, including parent suggestions. After some discussion, the focus was directed to the previous teacher meetings where various means of communicating information about the children have been considered. In order to make meaningful use of any information gained in this way, educational goals must be defined. The ensuing discussion brought up goals such as development of verbal expression and improvement of self-image, and it compared kindergarten and Head Start methods for implementing them through different experiences. Differences in approach were generally attributed to difference in class size, pupil-teacher ratio, and physical plant. In addition, kindergarten has less provision for consultation with specialists and with parents. It seems that Head Start personnel might offer assistance to Head Start alumni in these areas.

May: An assessment of pros and cons of the year's group experience included the following positive comments: (1) the informal setting was conducive to free expression of concerns; (2) new contacts led to collaboration of efforts to help a problem child; (3) comparing ideas seemed to lead to a trying out of new approaches to old problems; and (4) discussion of problems led to an increase in tolerance and understanding. On the negative side were the group's feelings of lack of direction and lack of concrete accomplishment. Interest was expressed for a continuing group next year, which would focus on an exploration of curriculum for these age levels. Suggestions included a study of other systems (e.g. experimental schools, the British schools), a case study approach to one classroom, and a re-evaluation of routines and methods generally considered standard at these age levels. The TEACH and ADRES scales were repeated at the end of this session.

Parent Meetings

November (12): At the first meeting of the parent group, there were eleven parents. After filling out the TEACH scale, they discussed the possibility of combining with the teacher group by January.

November (26): There were four parents present at the second meeting, only two of whom had been at the first. They were given the alienation scale and afterwards discussed the role of the parent in their children's education. The consensus was that involved parents have successful children, and that parents cannot rely on the school to do all the educating. Differences between schools (United States vs. Japanese, local vs. Eastern, public vs. parochial) were related to problems of transferring and to variations in methods and goals. Parents expressed dismay at children being promoted to the next grade without having to meet achievement criteria.

December: Twelve parents were present. A representative from the UCLA Department of Urban Affairs came to judge what kind of assistance that department could offer the project. Discussion revolved around possible avenues of communication between parents and school. There were many expressions of frustration with PTA's, and desire for an alternative organization was expressed. One mother suggested that there should be a paid person at school for the sole purpose of relating to parents--an "ombudsman." Another suggestion for protecting the teacher's precious time from multiple individual parent conferences was the idea of regular meetings of the teacher with all interested parents in her own class. This would permit two-way communication about goals, methods, and problems.

January: At this meeting there were only three parents. Two of them had had children in nursery school and were interested in the problems

involved in the transition from nursery to elementary school. One mother thought that the nursery teachers had been better able to see the potential and creativity of her child, whom the kindergarten teacher later found "difficult." She felt that she could not talk with the child's kindergarten teacher because the teacher would not understand. The one parent present who had had a child in Head Start felt that the kindergarten teacher was all right, but that her child felt bad about being in the bottom group in his class. All of the mothers agreed that dividing children into fast and slow groups was undesirable and favored team teaching as a possible alternative.

February: The meeting had a small but lively group of four parents who were eager to know what the teachers had been discussing in their group and when the two groups would get together. It was pointed out that the parents' group had not been consistent in attendance and that this had made it impossible to bring them to a point of meeting with the teachers. The parents wanted to know if the teachers were really interested in getting together with them. One mother introduced the term "Parent Power" and they discussed ways in which parents could bring pressure to bear on the school in order to make changes. Another parent said that she would like to be able to say to the teacher, "I'm for you. Can I help you?" but felt that the teacher was defensive. Another parent, who was also a teacher's aide, felt that the problem lay not with the teacher but in the school system. Again team teaching was discussed as a possible solution. They also discussed alternatives to PTA, which they found ineffective as a liaison group, and the pros and cons of grades vs. pass/fail evaluations of the students.

March: Four parents were present. The kindergarten mother made it clear that she was not interested in attending further parent meetings if

they were not going to meet with the teachers. There was a discussion on permissiveness vs. strictness of discipline in the classroom. One parent felt that differences between parental attitudes toward discipline and what is allowed in the classroom can cause a conflict with the child.

April: Preliminary phone calls indicated insufficient expected attendance to justify scheduling another meeting, and thus the remaining two parent meetings were cancelled.